# Connection Styles Assessment

Discover the styles in which you connect with others and with God.

# Connection Styles: How do you connect to others, your circumstances, and God

The Connection Style Assessment

From the beginning of time, connections have been a vital part of Human development. God created man and woman so He could connect with us. Understanding how we connect is vital to understanding our relationships with others. If we don’t understand how someone connects, communication can be confusing, frustrating or impossible.

The Connection Style Assessment provides insight about how you connect to others, yourself and God. The assessment evaluates your responses to questions about 10 Connections Styles. The results provide insight into how you connect. The results describe the Strengths, the Struggles and the needs for each Connections Style listed in your results. Your results will vary over time depending upon what you experience in life. Most individuals will have multiple connection styles, but one may be dominant.

Strengths:

This description provides insight for those who have not experienced significant trauma in their childhood or adult life. These individuals have experienced love and a stable environment for most of their lives.

Struggles:

This description most often reflects the responses of someone who has experienced abuse, neglect or other significant trauma during their childhood or as an adult.

Expectations:

This description provides insight regarding what we expect or need from others, from our circumstances, and God. While some consider “needs” negatively, in reality, we all have basic human needs. God created us that way. Getting our needs met Motivates our behavior, thoughts and feelings every day.

Changes in the Connection Style and how you respond to the style can change over time. For example, if you experience the struggles of the connection style because of trauma, but you heal from the trauma, you may begin to experience the strengths of the connection style. The same is true if you experience the Strengths of the connection style because of a stable environment but you experience a significant trauma, you may begin to experience the struggles of that style. However, the basic needs or expectations of each Connection Style rarely change. The needs/expectations provide the core for each Connection Style.

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| --- |
| **For each statement, choose up to 3 responses that feel most like you.** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **1. I accomplish the most when…** | | | 1. I know my work will give my family/myself the resources needed 2. my environment is secure 3. I follow an established routine 4. I am in an environment where I am included as part of team 5. I am confident about who I am | 1. when I know no one in my world is hurting 2. someone helps me out 3. I have inspiring, positive people around me 4. I know my accomplishments will be noticed 5. I know I am loved. | |
| **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. **2. I feel connected to God when….** | | | 1. He meets a financial need 2. I visibly see His protection in my life/my family’s life 3. His unchanging nature gives consistency in the midst of chaos 4. I am involved at church or in a small group 5. I am reminded I am unconditionally valuable to Him | 1. I can see evidence of his attentiveness to our hurts 2. He visibly impacts an overwhelming situation 3. He provides approval & direction for my endeavors 4. I am able to glorify Him 5. Others show me evidence of His love for me. | | |
| 1. **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. **3. I experience anxiety when** | | | 1. my pantry is not well stocked/there is a bill I can’t pay on time 2. a friend is disloyal or betrays my trust 3. a situation feels out of my control 4. there is conflict in my team/small group/family/circle of friends 5. Others insult or ignore me. | 1. No one notices or seems to care that I am hurting 2. Others don’t realize I need support/aren’t willing to help. 3. Others expect too much of me. 4. No one seems to want my input 5. someone I care about pulls away from me physically or emotionally | | |
| 1. **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **4. People rely on me for…** | | | 1. advice on management/leadership decisions 2. knowledge about emergency situations 3. organizing activities & events 4. ensuring all are included in team/group activities & decisions 5. showing interest in what they love to do/are passionate about | 1. being there to talk and listen when times are tough 2. lending a hand or finding resources 3. motivation to succeed 4. recognizing a job well done 5. A hug, a back rub, saying I love you just because | | |

|  |
| --- |
| **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **5. I find it hard to focus when ….** | | | 1. I don’t have enough resources 2. others threaten my own or my family’s security 3. I have a change in routine 4. I feel excluded or out of place 5. others are disinterested in/disregard what excites me | 1. No one is available when I am hurting or grieving 2. I am overwhelmed with no support 3. others don’t believe in me 4. no one recognizes my efforts 5. I don’t see evidence that anyone loves me | | |
| **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. **6. I feel calm when…** | | | 1. I am working hard 2. I can trust my friends 3. my day goes as I planned 4. there is harmony & support between people in my life 5. others are interested in my ideas | 1. I have helped someone who is hurting find some peace and joy. 2. I can help my friends as much as they can help me. 3. Others tell me that they know I can reach a goal. 4. I feel respected by others 5. I am with someone who loves me | | |
| 1. **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **7. I am distressed when …** | | | 1. I see a basic need (food, clothing, shelter) go unmet 2. I see others in danger or unprepared for emergencies 3. someone is living a chaotic life 4. someone is left out 5. someone is teased and insulted | 1. I see or hear hurt or pain in another 2. someone is overworked and overwhelmed with no help 3. someone feels they are unable to achieve their goals 4. someone goes unnoticed and unrewarded after significant effort 5. someone clearly believes no one loves them | |
| **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. **8. I am motivated when I…** | | | 1. help someone get their resources in order 2. help someone in an emergency or who is in danger 3. create helpful lists or routines 4. I am working with a team 5. Make others feel good about themselves. | 1. Offer a listening ear to a hurting friend 2. help someone when they are overloaded 3. have the opportunity to reward someone’s hard work/success 4. cheer someone on 5. make someone feel loved & special | | |
| 1. **Record Choices:** |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. **9. This characteristic of God is most significant to me: He is…** | | | 1. the source of all I have 2. the one who keeps us safe from harm 3. unchanging and always faithful 4. my Father, an adopter of His children 5. the basis of my identity | 1. peace in the midst of pain 2. the answer when I am overloaded 3. my encourager, lifting me up whether I fail or succeed 4. the one who recognizes my faithful work 5. The one whose love for me passes all understanding | |
| 1. **Record Choices:** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  | | --- | --- | | 1. **I am energized when I am able to…** | | | 1. provide necessities for those in need 2. create a safe haven for my family or friends 3. create routines and consistency for others 4. work together with others to achieve a mission 5. point out the value in others | 1. help someone feel less alone when hurting 2. support someone who is overloaded 3. let someone know I believe in them 4. show someone what a great job they did 5. help someone feel adored through a touch, a gift or a word | | |
| **Record Choices:** |

**Connection Style Assessment Scoring Key:**

Count the numbers of each letter choice you chose and then write the total in the boxes below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A: | B: | C: | D: | E: | F: | G: | H: | I: | J: |
| Provider | Guardian | Planner | Connector | Appreciator | Comforter | Helper | Encourager | Acknowledger | Lover |

**Your primary style is the one with the highest total.**

However, pay attention to the top three scoring styles. These are also key ways that you connect with others, and you will likely gain significant insights from their descriptions as well.

**Knowing your connection style can:**

1. Raise awareness of how God is connecting with you, just how you need Him to.

2. Change the patterns of your choices and behaviors. Being aware of the pitfalls of your style, can help change the choices you may have made otherwise.

3. Improve your relationships. When you can pinpoint how others connect, and you relate to them in that way it makes all the difference.

Find your connection style on the following pages.

# Connection Styles: How we connect to others, our circumstances, and God

**The Provider’s Strengths**  
The provider connects with others through providing life’s necessities. Although the individual’s definition of necessities might vary, food, shelter, and clothing are usually at the core. The Provider will have a strong work ethic, good management skills. They tend to be resourceful, and are willing to accept assistance from others when they need it. They thrive in assisting others in helping others become financially secure and find the resources they need. The Provider often works diligently to provide for those less fortunate, whether that means helping a neighbor in need, helping the homeless or donating clothing to a local charity.

The provider’s connection with God is typically rooted on His provision for his children. The provider may seek God more intently during times of stress, believing God will provide.

**The Provider’s Struggles**  
Circumstance and experience can make the provider vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Writing hot checks for food, utilities, and rent
* Quitting or sabotaging a job or means of income
* Constant poor money management even when income is sufficient,
* Compulsive spending on non-essentials when they are stressed
* Excessively providing for others in need when they cannot afford to do so.
* Working to the detriment of a healthy life balance to provide more

The provider can also struggle with feelings that God has abandoned him or her when necessities are scarce. The may believe God is simply refusing to provide the core necessities. Their connection can easily become strained, angry or non-existent in these circumstances.

**The Provider’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Provider expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* Food, clothing, and shelter always a priority,
* Full pantry,
* A steady source of income,
* A place to live, Resources to provide for the family

Guardian

**The Guardian’s Strengths**

Guardians connect with others by ensuring those they care about remaining safe. When the Guardian perceives a threat to a loved one, they react with intensity to protect the loved one from harm. The Guardian is cautious about developing intimate relationships because trust and loyalty are essential to their connections. The Guardian takes significant time to build friendships and is content with a small group of close trusted friends.

The Guardian takes the time to plan for potential dangers. The Guardian reassures those he cares for that they are safe, helps them learn how to make safe choices and how to protect themselves.

The Guardian thrives when their environment is secure, and they feel prepared for any situation.

The Guardian sees God as the ultimate Guardian of His people. The Guardian trusts God to protect him and his family, and he petitions God on behalf of his family regularly.

**The Guardian’s Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the Guardian vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Isolating their family because they feel they are the only one who can keep their loved ones safe.
* Becoming overprotective, fearful and unable to focus on routine tasks or connect to anyone until the perceived threats are eliminated.
* Avoiding others rather than confronting issues because the internal response to anger is fear, not just worry.
* Experiencing a primal fear for the emotional, physical, or spiritual safety of their loved ones and themselves.
* In extreme situations, completing avoiding the formation of close friendships to protect themselves from emotional pain or conversely remain in harmful relationships because that is what feels “normal.”

Although the Guardian connects to God as their Guardian, they may also not trust Him completely with their security or the security of those they love. They are vulnerable to taking situations out of God’s hands, sometimes unconsciously, and trusting their security to their precautions and choices.

**The Guardian’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Guardian expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* prepared for emergencies,
* awareness of potential risks to safety,
* safe relationships,
* needs to know their family is safe.

Planner

**The Planner’s Strengths**

Planners connect through creating predictability and consistency with others. The planner’s energy is devoted to creating routines as well as organizing and anticipating the reactions of those they work with, care for or supervise. The planner is very involved in the daily lives of their family and often knows exactly where each person they care for is at any point of the day.

The planner enjoys helping others create a better environment through organization and planning. They excel at assessing environments and individuals to determine whether they will respond in a predictable manner. However, the planner knows that there will be moments when a person does not respond as expected. The planner thrives in situations that do not require frequent changes in routine and where others are consistent. The love lists and plans, and are energized by them.

The planner relies on God as the unchanging source of strength in their life. The planner views God as the most predictable part of their life. They connect with God as unchanging and constant which sustains them in times of stress.

**The Planner’s Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the planner vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Experiencing anxiety, loss of focus or anger when they experience an unexpected change of routine or if someone reacts to them in an uncharacteristic manner.
* Sabotaging their sense of peace and wellbeing by creating chaos (i.e. keeping the home/office in disarray, choosing relationships with those who are very inconsistent)
* Taking control of every situation so that everything always follows the plan, the norm.
* Exhibiting obsessive-compulsive behaviors to maintain a stable and predictable environment.

The planner may become angry at or blame God for the chaos or disorder in their life and be unable to see Him as the stabilizing unchanging force in the midst of chaos. It can also be a challenge for the Planner to surrender control of their life completely to God.

**The Planner’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Planner expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* Consistency,
* Organized life,
* Having a routine,
* Predictable interactions and events

Connector

**The Connector’s Strengths**

Connectors connect by helping others to belong to something bigger than themselves. The Connector thrives in situations where they can work towards a shared vision or goal with others. They are quick to spot the lonely, awkward or underdog, and connect them with a group who can appreciate them for just who they are. They adapt well to the norms of the group, whether that is at work, in social situations, at home or church, and they help others to do the same. They are willing to sacrifice their needs and wants for needs of the group. Connectors see and promote the similarities and connections between people instead of focusing on the things that separate them. They strive to create harmony in their environments.

The Connector is at their best when they feel included and welcomed as part of a larger group, whether that be a small group of friends, their family, their church, coworkers, a small group or a team with a shared vision or project.

The Connector thrives in the knowledge that God adopted them into His family and that they are a fundamental part of the Church. This knowledge serves as reassurance and security even when they do not feel connected to other groups or people.

**The Connector’s Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the Connector vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Losing focus and motivation when they lose a group connection, or the connection becomes unstable.
* Isolating either physically or emotionally for fear of being rejected.
* Sacrificing core values to fit in or meet the needs of the group
* Singling out specific people to connect with and overwhelming them with attention and effort
* Connecting with unhealthy or dangerous groups
* Encouraging others to compromise or not stand up for their convictions to keep group harmony

The Connector is vulnerable to shifting beliefs about God and their Christian walk if the group’s needs and beliefs are in contradiction with their own. If their faith is not firmly grounded, the temptation to shift to maintain harmony and acceptance can be overwhelming.

**The Connector’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Connector expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* Sense of belonging to a group,
* Harmony within the group
* Cooperation among members of the group

Appreciator

**The Appreciator’s Strengths**

The appreciator connects with others by valuing those around them. They want others to know they are important simply because of who they are, not for their accomplishments. With their family, the appreciator takes an interest in what each family member enjoys by asking them about the activity and if possible joining the activity. The appreciator builds up those around them through descriptions of who they are rather than what they accomplish.

The appreciator thrives when others show a distinct interest in the things they enjoy and are passionate about. They are energized when others value them for who they are.

The appreciator connects with God based on the belief that God appreciates and values His creation unconditionally. When this relationship is strong, the appreciator has a strong sense of identity and personal value. Because of this, bad decisions and events are not likely as likely to derail them or their relationship with God.

**The Appreciator’s Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the appreciator vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Being consumed by the search for Identity.
* Believing that personal value comes from superficial qualities instead of from Christ.
* Becoming overly concerned with personal appearance or conversely exhibiting no concern for personal appearance.
* Insisting on their right to decide on activities or conversely losing interest in things they enjoy and only focus on what others enjoy.
* Consistently fishing for compliments.

The appreciator can struggle in their connection with God when they separate their sense of identity from who HE is and their relationship with Him. Listening to the world instead of the Word shakes the Appreciators personal value and worth.

**The Appreciator’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Appreciator expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* To be valued for who they are,
* Others to be interested in activities they participate in,
* Reminders of what their good qualities are.

Comforter

**The Comforter’s Strengths**

The comforter focuses on being attentive to the needs to those around them. They are typically an excellent listener and have a high level of empathy. They are very sensitive to the needs of those who are hurting. They tend to be skilled at asking questions, allowing others to share and process. The comforter is caring and compassionate. Those they are close to rely on the comforter when hurting or struggling.

While the comforter is aware of their need for comfort, they thrive most when they know those in their life are free from hurt or pain. They will tend to the needs of others before themselves as this creates peace in their world. When they are hurting, however, they crave connection to others, even if that connection is simply being together or a simple touch.

The comforter views God as the comforter who listens and responds to the hurts of his creation. They have an intimate understanding of God’s attentiveness to the hurts and needs of His creation. He is their first stop when struggling or hurting.

**The Comforters’ Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the comforter vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Internal conflict over the appropriateness of showing emotion as well as empathy.
* Avoiding relationships, not expressing their hurt to others or having an exaggerated response to personal hurt or loss.
* Finding themselves in one-sided relationships where they are constantly providing comfort but rarely receiving it in return. Moreover, in some cases, they may find the opposite to be true.
* In more severe cases, the struggling comforter may also turn to addictive behaviors or unhealthy (abusive or codependent) relationships to find the empathy and listening ear they seek.

When struggling, the comforter may choose not connect to God because they feel abandoned by Him, not recognizing His constant presence and comfort in their lives.

**The Comforter’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Comforter expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* Comfort when hurting,
* Needs to know they can comfort others,
* Need others to respond to efforts the comforter makes for comforting.

Helper

**The Helper’s Strengths**

The helper connects with others through providing support and assistance. Making themselves available to lend a helping hand is a priority. They provide guidance, locates resources and develop skills in others. The helper is skilled at recognizing what someone needs help with and offers assistance sometimes without being asked. When someone is overwhelmed, the helper is the first to step in and support him or her with concrete action. You will also find them frequently behind the scenes of a situation or project.

The helper thrives when they know they’ve made a difference by taking the load off of someone’s shoulders. However, the helper’s strongest connections are relationships that other a give and take of support and assistance.

The Bible’s stories of helping the downtrodden, the widow, and the orphan resonate with the helper. Their connection with God grows through their work in helping others.

**The Helper’s Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the helper vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Being manipulated into on too much or taking over a task for someone
* Giving someone money instead of helping them find resources
* Becoming overwhelmed and exhausted
* Feeling entitled to help from other, the government or God
* Becoming distraught or stuck when no one helps them in difficult situations

The helper can struggle in their connection when God when they don’t feel like He is fixing their situation, or helping them when they need it. It can be difficult to see the bigger picture at work.

**The Helper’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Helper expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* To support those in need,
* To know they made a difference,
* Support of others (may not ask for it.)

Encourager

**The Encourager Strengths**

The encourager connects by showing they believe in others’ ability to achieve a goal or to make the right choice in a difficult situation. They are a powerful cheerleader, and their positive attitude can be a motivating force for change in the lives of those closest to them. They emphasize the strengths of those around them and see most individual’s the best potential. By nature, they are an optimist, and it is difficult to discourage them.

The encourager thrives when others believe in them and cheer them on in their goals and choices. They love to be surrounded by positive attitudes and enjoy being inspired by those around them.

God’s encouragement of His people in Scripture motivates the encourager. They also actively look for His direction and approval when making changes in their life and when encouraging others in life changes.

**The Encourager’s Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the Encourager vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Becoming discouraged/apathetic when others do not believe the encourager has the power to make a change or achieve a goal.
* Hiding their goals or desires to change for fear others will not believe in them.
* Becoming disheartened or angry when those they encourage do not follow through on a goal or fall into old patterns.
* Teasing, using sarcasm or even bullying others when the encourager is anxious, unsure or struggling.
* Crossing the line from motivator and encourager to the controller. The encourager wants so strongly for others to reach their potential; the temptation to simply take control and push others too hard is strong.

The encourager’s connection with God may be challenged if they believe they faithfully followed His guidance, signs or encouragement and yet the outcome was not as expected. Doubt can become a powerful obstacle to the encourager.

**The Encourager’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Encourager expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* Others to believe in them,
* To set goals,
* Encouragement when trying to achieve a goal.

Acknowledger

**The Acknowledgers Strengths**

The acknowledger connects with others by recognizing their accomplishments and hard work. The acknowledger consistently rewards those they supervise for a job well done. They are careful to emphasize what others do well. With their family and close friends, they acknowledge even small victories with some outward act.

The acknowledger thrives in an environment where their accomplishments and hard work are recognized. The acknowledger’s level of confidence is positively affected when even small accomplishments are acknowledged by their supervisor or loved ones.

The acknowledger’s connection with God will often find focus in working out their faith and the grace they have received. Acknowledgers who can connect strongly with God’s recognition of His children can function with a high level of confidence and focus regardless of how frequently other’s provide an acknowledgment to them.

**The Acknowledgers Struggles**  
Circumstance and experience can make the acknowledger is vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Becoming discouraged/lacking motivation (or conversely overworking themselves!) when their accomplishments or hard work have not been acknowledged or are disregarded by others,
* Developing anxiety or apathy when relationships with authority figures are unclear.
* Finding it challenging to give gracefully or accept recognition.
* Exaggerating (or pretending to downplay) their accomplishments and hard work.
* Teasing or downplaying the accomplishments of others
* Focusing on a works based faith, instead of one based on faith and grace

Pride can be an obstacle to the acknowledger, convincing them to work hard for their glory instead of finding contentment and connection through the humble recognition they find (from God and others) in working for God’s Glory.

**The Acknowledger’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Acknowledger expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* Their achievements recognized,
* Know what boss or supervisor thinks of their work,
* Reassurance that they have done a good job.

Lover

**The Lover’s Strengths**

The lover connects with others through affection. The lover demonstrates Affection through physical, verbal or even through the simple gift of time. The Lover makes others feel relaxed and wanted. Hugs, back rubs, and even a simple touch to the arm or hand come naturally to them and the lover shares these with others freely. For the lover, the connection is all about communicating love whether through touch, words, gifts or time.

The lover’s strongest connections are with those that express affection toward them. The lover is most content in a relationship where mutual expressions of love are common.

Each lover is unique and may not express affection in every way possible. For some Lovers, physical touch is primary, for other words or gifts may be more their style.

The lover sees God as loving to His creation unconditionally and believes God’s love cannot be lost for any reason. Scriptures about God’s steadfast love for his creation will resound strongly with the lover. For this reason, the Lover is a valuable friend for those who feel unloved and separated from God.

**The Lover’s Struggles**

Circumstance and experience can make the lover is vulnerable to the following behaviors:

* Pushing others away and avoiding affection for fear of being hurt. Their emotions run strong and sometimes it is easier to avoid them.
* Feeling disconnected when they do not receive sufficient affection from someone they love.
* Developing poor physical boundaries
* Losing awareness of others possible discomfort with physical affection.
* Seeking to find physical intimacy and connection through sexual contact regardless of their marital state.

For the struggling lover, God can feel distant and even unreal. It is a strong faith that holds the Lover close to God, though He may not always be distinctly felt or heard.

**The Lover’s Expectations (Needs)**

The Lover expects (needs) the following in most daily activities:

* Affection expressed frequently,
* Reassurance that they are loved,
* Attempts at giving affection are reciprocated.